PARTNERSHIP SOUGHT: $20 000

Two teachers and ten students from remote communities participate in a five day career pathways program.

The most effective and competent health services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are managed and/or facilitated by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals.

THE NEED

- There are approximately 175 Indigenous medical practitioners currently working in Australia
- Based on population, 928 more health practitioners are required for equitable health services
- 30% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children complete secondary school, compared with the national average that is closer to 80%

PARTNERSHIP OPPORTUNITY

Health services and programs are successful when culture is respected and Indigenous people are on staff and in leadership roles. In recognising the need to build the Indigenous health workforce Menzies implemented a Youth Engagement Strategy in 2013.

The pathways program offers work experience to ten high achieving Indigenous high school students from remote communities. The week long program provides an insight into university life, employment in the health workforce and encourages students to consider a science and health career in the setting of a workplace rich in cultural diversity.

PARTNERSHIP IMPACT

Indigenous youth from the Northern and Central Australian remote communities will partake in a five-day intensive experience in the health, science and research arena at Menzies. They will have access to Indigenous role models, experience a bush medicine walk and talk and work alongside experienced and dedicated health and science professionals.

Partnerships between the Pathways Program Coordinator and school coordinators will improve future program delivery and provide further support for schools to guide Indigenous students to pursue further education and employment where little opportunity is available in remote communities.

Students will:

- Experience a university campus
- Experience what it is like to be in the workplace
- Gain an awareness of different career pathways and confidence to pursue a career in the health sector
- Develop laboratory skills and receive training in traditional and modern health research
- Gain an understanding of Indigenous health and health disparities
- Network with Menzies staff and learn from Indigenous health workers
- Network with other high achieving students with a similar prospective.

The five-day experience will not only inspire these students to complete their secondary school education but will encourage them to seriously consider tertiary education and a career in health or science. The pathways program is the beginning of a journey for an Indigenous student who has an interest in science, research or health and those that make this journey will be contributing to growing a much needed Indigenous health workforce.

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